

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 3951

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: CSCE, PFOR, PINT, UR
SUBJECT: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL LEADER ON PLANS FOR HUNGER
STRIKE IN SUPPORT OF ORLOV AND GINSBURG

1. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL LEADER VALENTIN TURCHIN HAS TOLD US THAT THE WIVES OF IMPRISONED CSCE GROUP MEMBERS ORLOV AND GINSBURG HAVE TEMPORARILY DELAYED PLANS TO START HUNGER STRIKE ON THEIR HUSBANDS' BEHALF. ACCORDING TO TURCHIN, THEY ORIGINALLY PLANNED TO START HUNGER STRIKE MARCH 27 BUT HAVE DECIDED TO DELAY IT TO AVOID EMBARRASSING SECRETARY VANCE DURING HIS MOSCOW VISIT. WHILE THE OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF THE HUNGER STRIKE WOULD BE TO PROTEST IMPRISONMENT OF ORLOV AND GINSBURG, TURCHIN STATED THAT THE REAL HOPE OF THE FAMILIES AND THE DISSIDENT COMMUNITY IS THAT THAT THE SOVIETS WILL DECIDE TO EXPEL THE CSCE GROUP MEMBERS RATHER THAN PUT THEM ON TRIAL.

2. WITH REGARD TO ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY OF SPEAKING OUT ON SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, TURCHIN EXPRESSED HOPE THAT SUCH EFFORTS WOULD CONTINUE, EVEN DURING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO MOSCOW. HE EMPHATICALLY DISAGREED WITH NOTION THAT RECENT OFFICIAL REPRESSION AGAINST

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DISSIDENTS IS A REACTION TO ADMINISTRATION STATEMENTS IN DEFENSE OF SAKHAROV, ORLOV AND GINSBURG. ACCORDING TO TURCHIN, THESE STATEMENTS MAY ACTUALLY HAVE SLOWED THE MOMENTUM OF A CRACKDOWN WHICH WAS DECIDED UPON AND BEGUN IN DECEMBER. IN ANY CASE, THE ADMINISTRATION'S STATEMENTS ARE, IN TURCHIN'S OPINION, MORALLY ADMIRABLE AND THEY SHOULD BE CONTINUED.

3. COMMENT. IT HAS BEEN A WIDELY HELD VIEW AMONG MOSCOW DISSIDENTS THAT STATEMENTS BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND INDIVIDUALS, ESPECIALLY STATEMENTS BY THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION, HAVE BEEN THE CHIEF MODERATING INFLUENCE OF SOVIET BEHAVIOR IN THE RECENT CRACKDOWN. ROY MEDVEDEV REPORTEDLY HOLDS TO A DIFFERENT VIEW, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THE PROBLEM WITH HIM. ALL DISSIDENTS WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED FEEL THAT QUITE DIPLOMACY IS ALSO NEEDED, AND MOST WILL ADMIT THAT IT IS FAR EARLIER TO GET THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO CHANGE THEIR MIND ON A GIVEN ISSUE WHEN SOVIET PRESTIGE HAS NOT BEEN ENGAGED THROUGH A PUBLIC POLEMIC.

4. TURCHIN HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN ONE OF THE MOST BALANCED AND OBJECTIVE DISSIDENT OBSERVERS OF THE SOVIET SCENE, AND HAS PREFERRED TO TAKE THE LONG VIEW OF THE DISSIDENT PROBLEM. HE NOW APPARENTLY PREFERS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD CONTINUE ITS PUBLIC STATEMENTS DURING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT. THIS, WE BELIEVE, RESULTS FROM HIS VIEW THAT THE IMMEDIATE, PHYSICAL DANGER TO ORLOV, GINZBURG, SHCHARANSKIY, ET AL, IS SO GREAT THAT EXTERNAL PUBLIC PRESSURE MUST BE APPLIED AND SUSTAINED TO GET THEM OUT OF THEIR SOVIET JAIL AND INTO EXILE.

5. AS WE UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT SITUATION, WE DOUBT THAT PUBLIC STATEMENTS DURING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT WOULD HELP THOSE CSCE GROUP MEMBERS CURRENTLY IN PRISON. NATURALLY, WE WOULD HAVE TO REACT VIGOROUSLY TO ANY BRUTAL ACTION WHICH
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THE SOVIETS MIGHT TAKE AGAINST THEM OR OTHER DISSIDENTS.
TOON

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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